



Strangford Lough Crossing

Connecting Communities • Unlocking Potential • Transforming Lives



The Problem Right Now



Ferry Constraints

34%

Ferry operates at only 34% capacity - artificially limiting natural demand

Limited hours: No Christmas Day service, restricted evening access



Lowest Wages

£450

Median weekly wage - the lowest in all of Northern Ireland

NI Average: £529/week (15% higher)



Massive Detour

75 km

Current road detour around the lough

With bridge: 8 minute crossing instead of 90 minute drive



Healthcare Access



No 24/7 emergency access to Downpatrick Hospital

Ferry hours: Emergency delays during off-hours



The Benefits of a Permanent Crossing



Better Jobs & Income

✓ **+7,500 to 18,000 new jobs** by 2030



Healthcare Transformation

✓ **24/7 emergency services** access

- ✓ Access to higher-paying mainland employment
- ✓ 15-25% wage increase potential for Peninsula residents
- ✓ Reduced economic inactivity from 23.6% to below 19%

- ✓ 67-minute average emergency response improvement
- ✓ Downpatrick Hospital catchment expansion
- ✓ Better recruitment of healthcare professionals



Tourism Growth

- ✓ **£95-110M tourism revenue** by 2030
- ✓ Seamless access to Peninsula attractions
- ✓ 40-60% increase in day-trip tourism (Year 1)
- ✓ Premier coastal destination status



Time & Convenience

- ✓ **8-minute crossing** vs 90-minute detour
- ✓ 24/7 access - no waiting for ferry schedule
- ✓ Weather-independent reliable crossing
- ✓ Eliminates 67km journey for every crossing



Environmental Benefits

- ✓ **45,000 tonnes CO₂ saved** annually (Year 30)
- ✓ Elimination of ferry vessel emissions
- ✓ Shorter journey distances reduce fuel consumption
- ✓ Cycling & walking paths integrated



Community Connection

- ✓ **94% community support** for permanent crossing
- ✓ Enhanced educational opportunities
- ✓ Improved access to family, friends, services
- ✓ Reduced isolation for Peninsula residents



Ferry vs Bridge: The Reality Check

| Measure | Current Ferry | With Bridge |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Annual Crossings (Year 1) | 237,000 | 886,000 |
| Annual Crossings (Year 30) | 237,000 | 2.1M - 6.9M |
| Operating Hours | Limited hours | 24/7 Access |
| Journey Time | Wait + 8 min | 8 minutes |
| Alternative Route | 75 km detour | Direct crossing |
| Weather Dependency | Service disruptions | All-weather reliable |
| Emergency Access | Ferry hours only | 24/7 Emergency |
| Economic Impact | Minimal growth | Transformational |



The Numbers That Matter

20×

More daily traffic
than ferry

94%

Community
support for

67

Minutes saved in
emergency

(Cleddau Bridge
evidence)

permanent
crossing

response time

£3-4B

Economic value
created over 30
years

+18K

Potential new jobs
by 2030

8 min

Crossing time vs
90-minute detour



It's Time to Build the Future

The evidence is clear. The community support is overwhelming. The economic case is proven.

A permanent crossing isn't just about transport — it's about transforming lives, unlocking potential, and building a prosperous future for the Ards Peninsula and all of Northern Ireland.

Based on Cleddau Bridge evidence, NI Executive Sub-Regional Economic Plan (2024), and comprehensive traffic analysis